



CITY OF NORFOLK

Amendment to the 2004-2008 Consolidated Plan Revised Citizen Participation Plan

Citizen Participation Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION:

The Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for participation by the citizens of the City of Norfolk ("City") in activities funded by four federal programs, which are the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG"), the Emergency Shelter Grant, the Home Investment Partnership and the American Dream Down Payment Initiative Program.

This Citizen Participation Plan is designed to encourage citizen participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Plan and the performance report. It also describes the citizen participation process as it applies to the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

The Consolidated Plan is a multi-year document, covering a five-year time frame. It is a comprehensive planning document that discusses Norfolk's community development and housing needs, with particular emphasis on providing decent housing, creating suitable living environments, enhancing the City's economic viability, and expanding economic opportunities for low and very low income persons. It includes an assessment of Norfolk's housing and homeless needs, analysis of the housing market, a three to five year Strategic Plan that addresses priority concerns, and an annual Action Plan that allocates available federal resources in support of the Consolidated Plan. The Annual Action Plan allocates funds from the four programs in which the City participates.

The goal of the consolidated planning process is to provide a unified vision for community development actions. Obtaining citizen views on housing and community development needs in the City plays a key part in defining that vision.

2. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN PROCESS

A. Initial Open Forum (1st Public Hearing)

The Consolidated Plan Open Forum initiates the process. It is the first public hearing. Citizens are invited to identify housing and community development needs, and to comment on past performance. This information is used for plan development and reassessment. The Consolidated Plan Open Forum is held by the City Planning Commission ("CPC"). Citizens may speak at the Open Forum, submit ideas in writing, or contact identified staff. Representatives of organizations and agencies that support or advocate for low income groups or for areas affected by public actions are invited to attend the Open Forum and are recognized as the Citizen Advisory Group; the participating organizations and agencies are the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority ("NRHA"), Endependence Center, Resident Organization, the Norfolk Homeless Coalition, Empowerment 2010, the Norfolk Federation of Civic Leagues, the Inner City Federation of Civic Leagues, the Church Street/Huntersville Task Force, the Ocean View Task Force, the Southside Task Force, and any other relevant organization as identified.

B. The Consolidated Plan Work Group

A Consolidated Plan Work Group ("Work Group") that consists of City staff representing the various City departments, divisions and offices, and agencies that can speak to the housing needs of lower income households and community development shall receive comments, suggestions and proposals for the development of the Consolidated Plan. Represented in the Work Group are the NRHA, the City's Department of Planning and Community Development, the Office to End Homelessness, the Department of Human Services and the Office of Budget and Management. The Office of Grants Management facilitates and coordinates the process.

C. Initial Consolidated Plan Development

Based upon comments, suggestions, and proposals received through the Open Forum and related activities, the Work Group and the Advisory Group will draft a recommended Consolidated Plan, and an Annual Action Plan. All comments and all requests for funding received will be discussed. The draft will contain an assessment of housing and community needs, the strategic plan, and the action plan or budgets. The draft plan is a staff recommendation to the CPC. The Advisory Group will forward its comments on the draft plan to the CPC.

A copy of the draft plan will be distributed to all persons who participated in the development stages and who submitted suggestions; it will be available at all the public library branches of the City, and at the neighborhood recreation centers. If the draft plan package is of considerable size, a detailed summary of the proposal,

including budgets, will be provided instead. Copies of the draft plan will also be available electronically upon request. All persons and groups receiving this information will be advised as to the processing schedule of the draft program, including the date of the CPC Public Hearing and the 30-day comment period.

D. City Planning Commission Public Hearing (2nd Public Hearing)

The second public hearing for the draft plan will be held by the CPC. Appointed by the City Council, the CPC represents interests throughout the City of Norfolk. The involvement of the CPC in this effort takes advantage of both the broad representations of the group and its work in providing guidance to City Council on a wide and varied range of elements crucial to the City's development. Included among its tasks is extensive participation in the neighborhood planning and development process.

The CPC will review the recommended program in light of its policies and objectives, and the comments received. Following its hearing and its deliberations, the CPC will forward its recommendation to City Council.

E. City Council Public Hearing (3rd Public Hearing) and Plan Adoption

The CPC's recommendation is the basis of the third public hearing, which is held by City Council after publication of notice in a local newspaper of general circulation. As the elected representatives of the citizens, the City Council members add knowledge and influence regarding ongoing and planned public programs and activities to the process. This comprehensive view contributes to the development of a Consolidated Plan/Annual Plan that enhances movement toward the acknowledged goals and vision for the city.

The City Council adopts the Consolidated Plan which finalizes all budgets. Upon adoption of the Consolidated Plan, the City will forward it to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. After action on the application by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City will publish a notice in a general circulation newspaper. This notice will advise that the application has been submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is available to interested parties upon request.

In summary, the plan development procedures of the City of Norfolk provides citizens many opportunities to express their views on community development and housing needs, and the programs and activities proposed to meet those needs. There is citizen participation throughout the process, including the ***citizen advisory groups, public notices, three public hearings and a 30-day comment period.***

3. ANNUAL PLAN PROCESS

A. Open Forum (1st Public hearing)

The Annual Plan Open Forum initiates the process. It is the first public hearing. Information gathered from this forum is used for plan development and reassessment. Persons may speak at the Open Forum, submit ideas in writing, or contact identified staff. The identified Advisory Group will be invited to attend the Open Forum.

B. Application Process

The City receives requests for organizational financial assistance for program implementation under the Community Development Block Grant, Emergency Shelter Grant, HOME Investment Partnership and American Dream Down Payment Initiative funds. Applications shall be available a minimum of 30 days prior to the deadline for the submission of the application. The information must be submitted in a specified format by the published deadline. Proposals that do not clearly provide requested major elements will not receive funding consideration.

C. Annual Plan Development

Based upon comments, suggestions, and proposals received through the Open Forum and related activities, the Work Group and the Advisory Group will develop a recommended Annual Action Plan. All comments and requests for funding received will be discussed with the Advisory Group and the CPC.

The draft Annual Plan is a staff recommendation to the City Planning Commission. The Advisory Group will forward its comments on the draft to the CPC.

A copy of the recommended Annual Plan will be distributed to all those who participated in the development stages and to those who submitted suggestions; it will be available at all the public library branches of the City, and at the neighborhood recreation centers. If the draft plan package is of considerable size, a detailed summary of the proposal, including budgets, will be provided instead. Copies of the draft plan will also be available electronically upon request. All persons and groups receiving this information will be advised as to the processing schedule of the draft program, including the date of the CPC Public Hearing and the 30-day comment period.

C. City Planning Commission Public Hearing (2nd Public Hearing)

The second public hearing will be held for the staff recommended Annual Plan. The CPC will review the recommended program in light of its policies and objectives, and the comments received. Following its hearing and its deliberations, the CPC will forward its recommendation to City Council.

E. City Council Approval of the Annual Plan

The City Council adopts the Annual Plan which finalizes all budgets. Upon completion of the process, the City will forward the adopted Annual Plan to the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”). After action on the application by HUD, the City will publish a notice in a general circulation newspaper. This notice will advise that the application has been submitted to HUD and will be available to interested parties upon request.

In summary, the plan development procedures of the City of Norfolk provide citizens many opportunities to express their views on community development and housing needs, and the programs and activities proposed to meet those needs.

4. PARTICIPATION OF LOW INCOME GROUPS AND AFFECTED PERSONS

In addition to the efforts to notify the general public of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan processes, special actions will be taken to ensure that low and moderate income citizens and residents of blighted areas in the City, which are most directly affected by the programs, will be adequately informed. The continuing participation of these groups in the process is assured by the composition of the Citizen Advisory Group.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS NOTICES

Advertisements regarding the Public Hearings detailing the date, time, place, amount of funds available to the City, and range of activities eligible for funding, American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility and non-English speaking accommodations will be placed in a general circulation newspaper two weeks prior to any hearing. These notices will also advise the public of the availability of information placed in all City of Norfolk branch libraries and neighborhood recreation centers and will include:

- Amount of funds available to the City from entitlement and program income sources, if known;
- Range of activities eligible for funding;
- The amount of funds proposed for activities that will benefit low and moderate income people;
- The proposed activities likely to result in displacement;
- Plans for minimizing displacement;
- Assistance available to displacees;
- Previously funded CDBG activities;
- Role of citizens in the Community Development process;
- Process by which the application will be approved;
- Date, time, place, and accessibility to the handicapped; and
- Procedures of the Open Forum, including the deadline and application format for the submission of requests for funding.

The information provided will also include contact information for the submission of written suggestions for those persons unable to attend the Open Forum. When possible, the local broadcast media will provide public service announcements regarding Open Forums and the availability of information.

6. NOTICE OF DRAFT PLANS AVAILABILITY

A notice of availability of the draft Consolidated and Annual Plans will be placed in a general circulation newspaper. A summary of plan resources expected to be available, and activities recommended for funding will be included in the public notice. The public notice will also identify locations where complete copies of the plan may be viewed or attained.

The 30-day comment period will be noted as well as the date, time, and location of the public hearing on the recommended plan. The public notice will also include the amount of funds designated to benefit low and moderate-income persons, and accessibility to the handicapped. The opportunity to comment on past performance will also be noted. Efforts will also be made to inform citizens of the public hearing through the local broadcast media. Persons and/or organizations submitting requests for funding will be individually notified of these public hearings.

7. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Citizen involvement in the Program Implementation phase of the Consolidated Plan will take place at both the neighborhood and City-wide levels. City-wide citizen participation in the Program Implementation phase will be the responsibility of the CPC.

At the neighborhood level, those groups in areas where Consolidated Plan activities are being implemented will serve a strong advisory role in the prioritization of needs and expenditures of funds. Through the regular meetings of the neighborhood groups, whether a Redevelopment and Conservation Project Area Committees or Neighborhood Planning and Coordinating Committees, the continual exchange of information regarding the stated neighborhood objectives and the planned program will insure a level of citizen input sufficient to affect program implementation.

The City of Norfolk Planning Commission, during its regularly scheduled meetings, will review those activities included in the Consolidated/Annual Plans and offer input and guidance in the implementation stages.

8. ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

In addition to encouraging comments on program performance at the Open Forum, the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) is another means to assess performance.

Contents of the report will include the progress on planned activities, an assessment of the effectiveness of the programs in meeting objectives, progress in providing housing assistance, status of environmental reviews, and information regarding the City's compliance with equal opportunity and citizen participation standards. The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report will be made available to citizens for a 15-day comment period prior to its submission to the Department of

Housing and Urban Development. Comments received will be summarized and attached to the CAPER. After submission, the public will be advised as to its availability.

In addition, all records pertaining to the City of Norfolk's Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report are available for public review during business hours in the Office of Grants Management, 5th Floor, Room 508, City Hall Building, Norfolk, Virginia.

9. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSOLIDATED OR ANNUAL PLANS

A. Amendments in General

The jurisdiction shall amend its approved Consolidated Plan or Annual Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- (1) To make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds;
- (2) To carry out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the consolidated plan (including program income), not previously described in the action plan; or
- (3) To change the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

All amendments are limited to changes from one eligible activity to another and all proposed amendments must be reviewed and approved by the official representative of the City. A summary of the proposed amendment will be placed in a general circulation newspaper and a 30-day comment period will be scheduled. All amendments will be made public and the City will notify HUD when an amendment has been made. Comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally shall be considered during the amendment process and shall be attached to the amendment.

B. Substantial Amendment

A Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Plan is defined as more than 25% change in the use of total annual available funds from one eligible activity to another for each and any of the federal programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

A Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Plan shall require Citizen Participation as prescribed by this Plan. Citizens shall be offered reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Consolidated or Annual Plan. Commencing upon the publication of a notice in one or more area newspapers of general circulation summarizing the proposed substantial amendment, a period of not less than 30 calendar days will be provided to receive in writing, or orally during public hearings, if any, the comments and views of citizens before the amendment is implemented. All comments or views of citizens received

in writing, or orally during public hearings, if any, shall be considered in preparing the substantial amendment. A summary of these comments or views, including reasons for not accepting a comment or view, will be attached to the amendment.

In addition, proposed actions to substantially amend the City's Consolidated or Annual Plans will be addressed in a public hearing held by the CPC. Notices regarding the public hearing will be placed in local general circulation newspapers two weeks prior to the hearing describing the time, date, place and topic of the hearing. After review, comments on the proposed amendment shall be forwarded to City Council to take action. If the substantial amendment is approved by City Council, the amendment will be made public.

Upon completion of the substantial amendment process, the City shall notify the HUD that an amendment has been made. A copy of the amendment will be provided to the HUD office for the jurisdiction and shall include a transmittal letter signed by the official representative of the City.

10. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The City shall encourage, in conjunction with NRHA, the participation of all of its citizens.

The City will take reasonable action to include all of its citizens including minorities, non-English speaking persons as well as those with disabilities. Public hearing times and locations will be convenient to citizens and will be ADA accessible.

When a significant number of Non-English speaking residents will be in attendance, such groups may request a translation of the summary of the documents 10 business days in advance of a Public Forum. In addition, the Office of Grants Management will provide technical assistance to low and moderate income applicants in proposal development.

11. COMPLAINT PROCESS

All citizens' complaints pertaining to the City's Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan programs will be processed under the authority of the Manager of the Office of Grants Management, provided that the Manager certifies in writing to the complainant that neither he nor his department has a conflict of interest. If the Office of Grants Management cannot so certify, the City Manager shall appoint an alternative investigator who has no conflict of interest. Complaints shall be answered in a timely and responsible manner.

The following procedures shall be adhered to:

- a) Complaints received by the City of Norfolk will be referred immediately to the Office of Grants Management for review.

- b) An investigation of the complaint will be conducted, including seeking responsible sources of information and reviewing relevant statutes and regulations.
- c) Within 15 business days of the City's receipt of the complaint, a written response will be sent to the complainant addressing each specific issue raised in the complaint.
- d) Every effort will be made to achieve the resolution of all complaints within 30 days of their receipt by the City of Norfolk.

The above procedure refers to complaints other than those dealing with housing or program discrimination covered by Federal Civil Rights Laws such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, of 1988. Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other Federal Civil Rights Statutes as well as Executive Order 11063.

Complaints alleging discrimination will be forwarded directly to: Philadelphia Regional Office of FHEO, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, The Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East, 12th Floor, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3380

12. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In an effort to maintain a high degree of citizen participation in the City's Consolidated Plan, the approved applications, the Annual Plan, the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Reports, and the Citizen Participation Plan will be available at the following locations:

Office of Grants Management
810 Union Street, Room 508
Norfolk, VA 23510

Kirn Memorial Library
301 E. City Hall Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23510